



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
P.O. Box 45010, Olympia, Washington 98504-5010

December 18, 2008

To: All DSHS Staff

From: Robin Arnold-Williams  
Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin Arnold-Williams".

Subject: Governor Gregoire Announces Budget for 09-11

This morning, Governor Chris Gregoire presented her budget recommendations for the remainder of this fiscal year and for the 2009-11 biennium. As you know, these budgets were prepared under difficult conditions. State revenues continue to decline, but demand for state services continues.

State law requires that the Governor submit a biennial budget proposal that does not require a tax increase. The Governor has said that it would be inappropriate to increase taxes in this economic climate.

Therefore, the budget the Governor released reflects some difficult choices. It will require spending reductions in every part of state government, including DSHS. A description of the Governor's budget recommendations is available at the following web site: <http://www.governor.wa.gov/priorities/budget/>. The budget documents are available at <http://ofm.wa.gov/budget09/>. Please take a moment and review this information to get a feel for the reductions the Governor has had to put forward.

DSHS will shoulder our share of the budget reductions in the coming months. Among the reductions proposed are the elimination of the General Assistance Unemployable program, the closure of several of our institutions (Juvenile Rehabilitation's Naselle Youth Camp and Developmental Disabilities' Yakima Valley School) and reduction in payments to our providers (hospitals, doctors, mental health providers, nursing homes among many others). To minimize the impact on clients we will need to continue to change the way we do business. We will take further administrative reductions throughout the agency. Over the next two years we will reduce our workforce by approximately 1,000.

It's also important to recognize what the Governor chose to protect. The Department's core mission has been maintained: services to children and families, vulnerable adults, low-income children in need of health care, services that are based on evidence-based practice. The Governor has placed an emphasis on directing our resources to those at highest risk. Reductions in other parts of the state budget helped maintain these core services.

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Over the next few days, your Assistant Secretary will tell you in more detail the reductions that will affect your program. Over the next few months, the Legislature will review the Governor's recommendations and, with input from stakeholders and constituents, determine the final 2009-11 state budget.

It is not possible to reduce state spending in DSHS by the level being required without having an impact on our clients, communities and co-workers. However, lack of revenue compels deliberate actions. Our challenge is to handle this situation with compassion, fortitude, and grace. Let's take care of each other as we help our communities through these difficult times.